REMARKS

Though not conceding to the Examiner's position Applicant has amended certain claims to better clarify Applicant's present invention.

Claim Rejection – 35 USC § 103

The Examiner rejected claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Barber, Jr. et al. (5,460,883) in view of Marc Broekaert's article "polyurea coatings" (Office Action Item 4).

The Examiner rejected claims 1-10, 16, 18, 29, 31, and 33-38 under 35 U.S.C § 103(a) as being unpatentable over St. Germain (5,651,572) in view of either Bassani (4,098,861) or Marc Broekaert's article "polyurea coatings" (Office Action Item 5).

The Examiner rejected claims 17 and 25-27 under 35 U.S.C § 103(a) as being unpatentable over St. Germain (5,651,572) in view of either Bassani (4,098,861) or Marc Broekaert's article "polyurea coatings", and further in view of Smith et al. (6,443,660) (Office Action Item 6).

Applicant contends that Applicant's present invention includes features and/or advantages that are patentable, novel, and non-obvious in view of the art disclosed by the cited references. One such feature is Applicant's structured coating layers. In this regard, Applicant uses an initial layer of coating to seal the plurality of core fibers from exposure to and ingress of contaminates. Additional layers of coating are then applied in areas of the sling body that are subjected to high crush and shear forces. As Applicant's coating has superior shear and tear strength these additional layers increase the thickness of the coating and correspondingly the shear strength of the coating.

An advantage of this, in Applicant's present invention, is that both the coating and the plurality of core fibers are better protected from the high crush and shear force trauma damage during use of the lifting sling. A final splatter layer of the coating is then applied along the sling body creating a rugged textured non-slip grip exterior surface. Applicant teaches this feature throughout Applicant's Figures and specification and in particular in Applicant's Figures 1J-1L, starting on page 18 line 21 through page 19 line 22, starting on page 23 line 19 through page 24 line 20, page 30 lines 1-8, starting on page 34 line 6 through page 36 line 9, page 58 lines 10-17, page 60 lines 12-19, page 63 lines 13-20, and starting on page 65 line 24 through page 66 line 3.

Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 25, and 29 to clarify this feature Applicant regards as patentable, novel and non-obvious in view of the art disclosed by the cited references as follows:

"a plurality of core fibers forming a sling body, **said sling body is load bearing**;

... a coating, said coating material is at least an isocyanate mixed with an amine forming polyurea, said coating is disposed onto said plurality of core fibers, said coating is applied in patterns of varying thicknesses and locations along length of said sling body, **initial layer of said coating seals said plurality of core fibers from exposure to contaminates, additional layers of said coating are applied in areas of said sling body subject to high crush and shear forces increasing said coating thickness and shear strength, preventing said plurality of core fibers and said coating damage during use of said lifting sling**, and achieving operational properties that extend suitability for use of said coating and said plurality of core fibers, **a final splatter layer of said coating is applied along said sling body creating a rugged textured non-slip grip exterior surface**, said coating thicknesses and locations along length of said sling body are selected based in part on operating conditions of said lifting sling..." (Applicant's Independent claims 1, 25, and 29)

The cited references, including St. Germain, Barber, and Bassani, do not teach or suggest Applicant's structured coating layer feature and Marc Broekaert's article does not teach or suggest applications with lifting slings or using *"...additional layers of said coating are applied in areas of said sling body subject to high crush and shear increasing said coating thickness and shear strength, preventing said plurality of core fibers and said coating damage during use of said lifting sling"*. (Applicant's independent claim 1, 25, and 29)

Furthermore, the cited references do not teach or suggest using a sealing layer of coating around the plurality of core fibers to prevent ingress of contaminates or adding a splatter coating to create a rugged texture, thus improving non-slip grip attributes of the lifting sling.

As such, Applicant contends that the art disclosed by the cited references individually or in combination do not teach or suggest Applicant's *"... initial layer of said coating seals said plurality of core fibers from exposure to contaminates, additional layers of said coating are applied in areas of said sling body subject to high crush and shear forces increasing said coating thickness and shear strength, preventing said plurality of core fibers and said coating damage during use of said lifting sling, and achieving operational properties that extend suitability for use of said coating and said plurality of core fibers, a final splatter layer of said coating is applied along said sling body creating a rugged textured non-slip grip exterior surface..."* as taught and claimed in Applicant's independent claims 1, 25, and 29.

Another feature and/or advantage that Applicant contends is patentable, novel, and non-obvious in view of the art disclosed by the cited references is how Applicant's safety core is bonded by the coating proximate to the plurality of core fibers causing *"the safety core, the coating, and the plurality of core fibers to be subjected to the same*

operational forces during use of the lifting sling". Applicant teaches this feature throughout Applicant's Figures and specification and in particular in Applicant's Figures 2A, page 11 lines 1-6, starting on page 36 line 11 through page 39 line 23, page 40 lines 9-28, and starting on page 63 line 25 through page 64 line 9.

Applicant has amended dependent claims 7 and 31 to clarify this feature Applicant regards as patentable, novel and non-obvious in view of the art disclosed by the cited references as follows:

"...said lifting sling further comprising a safety core, said safety core is bonded by said coating proximate to said plurality of core fibers causing said safety core, said coating, and said plurality of core fibers to be subjected to the same operational forces during use of said lifting sling." (Applicant's dependent claims 7 and 31)

The cited references, including St. Germain, Barber, and Bassani, do not teach or suggest Applicant's "*...safety core is bonded by the coating proximate to said plurality of core fibers causing the safety core, the coating, and the plurality of core fibers to be subjected to the same operational forces during use of the lifting sling*" feature. In addition, St Germain does not teach or suggest a safety core being bonded to the plurality of core materials with a coating as taught by Applicant and Marc Broekaert's article does not teach or suggest applications, wherein a coating is used to create a structure comprising a plurality of core fibers, a safety core, and coating such that the entire structure can be subjected to the same forces during use of the lifting sling, with one advantage being the ability to better monitor and determine suitability for use of the lifting sling.

Applicant contends that in view of Applicant's amendments and clarifications that claims 1-10, 16-18, 25-27, 29, 31, and 33-38 are allowable and respectfully requests that the Examiner remove objections/rejections to the claims.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and further examination of all claims 1-10, 16-18, 25-27, 29, 31and 33-38 listed above. Applicant submits that in view of the remarks set forth above, this application is in condition for allowance and requests early notification to this effect.

Respectfully Submitted,

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the USPTO or deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on: July 3, 2008

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